

LOSS, OR: ONE THING MY MOTHER AND I HAVE IN COMMON

:anticipating what we're going to  
lose, have lost already At 22 i  
was sure i saw wrinkles In the  
car each of us knows we've lost  
our glasses, money keys Once  
we find that we dig for some  
thing different My love hates  
to be woken up early he says it's  
like some shovel scooping thru  
stones when i start to hunt  
My mother and i are both oral  
her lips on ciggies the first  
word i could say At sixteen i  
chewed huge pieces of bubble  
gum 60 a day later my own  
skin We both gain weight  
fast it's as if we are store  
housing (she's got rolls of  
toilet paper in her dark huge  
hall closet i've tins of  
cat food bubble bath musk  
and men) stocking up on what  
we'd notice most if it  
was gone

OH YES

days like a brush  
with bristles of  
porcupine, you  
want to drown in  
soap feel some  
thing hot let  
the waves in  
the noise is  
louder you think  
you're going  
under but nothing  
gets thru the glass  
: it's like going  
thru one of those  
automatic car washes

SATURDAY

they went in with  
sledge hammers they  
went in and didn't  
give a fuck about  
the dust the mess  
when once you get  
started it was  
like a big fight in  
a marriage swinging  
sharp things picking  
right down to the  
By night nobody  
could breathe or  
yell it was getting  
at dry rot feeling  
the roof fall in  
huge hunks around  
it was work it was  
getting the dirty  
inside and scrubbing  
it out it was getting  
all the way back  
to what was

-- Lyn Lifshin

Niskayuna NY